

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00
INR-10 NSAE-00 DODE-00 HA-05 L-03 /058 W
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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO USMISSION GENEVA
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C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 8076

FOL TEL SENT ACTION IMMEDIATE BANGKOK INFO PRIORITY VIENTIANE
FROM UDORN DATED MARCH 15, 1978 REPEATED TO YOU

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L UDORN ;066

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SREF TH LA
SUBJECT: HMONG INFLUX INTO NONG KHAI PROVINCE

REF: (A) UDORN 0065 (B) BANGKOK 7692

1. CONSUL FINNEY VISITED G-2 SHOP AT 2ND RTA FORWARD
IN SAKHON NAKHON MARCH 15 TO OBTAIN THEIR INFORMAL
ASSESSMENT OF HMONG REFUGEE SITUATION IN NONG KHAI.

2. G-2 COLONEL LERT KANITHANAKA, AND TWO SUBORDINATES,
BRIEFLY OUTLINED THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF RECENT DEVELOPMENTS
IN NONG KHAI WHICH ESSENTIALLY IS
REPETITION OF INFORMATION WE ALREADY KNOW. COLONEL LERT
ADDED THAT HE BELIEVES THAT THERE ARE TWO LPDR UNITS ,
TOTALLING 200-300 PMEN, OPERATING IN AREAS ALONG
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MEKONG RIVER BORDER WHERE HMONH REFUGEES HAVE BEEN MAKING
THEIR CROSSINGS. HE ADDED THAT WHILE SOME SMALL LPDR
PATROLS APPEAR TO BE ATTACKING GROUPS OF HMONG DETECTED
CROSSING THE BORDER, THERE ARE NO SIGNS AT PRESENT THAT
LPDR FORCES ARE ORGANIZING TO CONDUCT LARGE-SCALE OPERATIONS
AGAINST THE HMONG.

3. FOLLOWING SAKHON NAKHON VISIT, CONSUL TRAVELLED TO BUNG KAN AND PHON VHISAI DISTRICTS TO INTERVIEW POLICE OFFICIALS AND HMONG REFUGEE REPRESENTATIVES, MAIN POINTS TO REPORT ARE AS FOLLOWS.

4. MMONG ARRIVALS - TOTAL OF 49 HMONG REFUGEES ARRIVED IN TWO DISTRICTS IN THREE SEPERATE GROUPS DURING EARLX MORNING HOURS OF MARCH 15. ACCORDING TO PHON PHISAI DISTRICT POLICE CHIEF LT COL RUNGSAKSANGSORN, SEVEN OF NEW ARRIVALS TO HIS DISTRICT PURCHASED LARGE SACKS OF RICE AND RECROSSED MEKONG RIVER SAME DAY TO REDISTRIBUTE THEM TO GROUPS OF HMONG STILL HIDING ON LAO SIDE THAT HAVE BEEN WITHOUT FOOD FOR SEVERAL DAYS.

5. REPRESENTATIVES OF THREE GROUPS OF NEWEST ARRIVALS REPORTED THAT FIFTEEN OF THEIR COMPATRIOTS PERISHED DURING RIVER CROSSING FROM LPDR GUNFIRE AND DROWNING. LT COL RUNGSAK STATED THAT AN AUSTRALIAN FREE LANCE PHOTOGRAPHER IDENTIFIED AS MR NIGEL, WHO MAY WORK FOR BANGKOK WORLD, PHOTOGRAPHED MARCH 15 TWO BODIES OF SIX HMONGS THAT DIED ATTEMPTING TO ENTER PHON PHISAI.

6. RTG EXCLUSIONARY POLICY - LT COL RUNGSAK AND BUNG KAN DISTRICT DEPUTY POLICE CHIEF INDICATED THAT THEY ARE PERMITTING HMONG TO ENTER THEIR DISTRICTS, WITH TACIT APPROVAL OF PROVINCIAL AUTHORITIES. LT COL RUNGSAK, WHO APPEARS TO BE CONFIDENTIAL

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IN CLOSE CONTACT WITH HMONG WAITING ACROSS RIVER PREDICTS LARGE NUMBERS OF NEW ARRIVALS DURING NEXT COUPLE OF DAYS.

7. BASED ON CONVERSATION WITH LT COL RUNGSAK, STORY ON FRONT PAGE OF BANGKOK WORLD MARCH 14 (CITED REFTEL B, PARA 3) IS UNFOUNDED. HE CLAIMS THAT MEETING WITH LPDR TROOP UNIT COMMANDER ON DON KHON RAT ISLAND CONCERNED RETURN OF ERRANT LAO WATER BUFFALOES AND ON FA AN AGREEMENT TO CEASE SHOOTING AT HMONG REFUGEES. LATTER CAREFULLY AVOID CROSSING MEKONG IN VICINITY OF DON KHON RAT SINCE THEY KNOW LPDR TROOPS ARE DEPLOYED ON ISLAND.

8. US VLOAG CAMA CAMA SERVICES REP, OPERATING OUT OF NONG KHAI REFUGEE CAMP, CONTINUES TO PROVIDE PROMPT SERVICES TO INCOMING HMONG REFUGEES. HE DISTRIBUTED FOOD AND CLOTHING TO NEWEST ARRIVALS AT PHON VHISAI AND BUNG KAN WHICH WAS WELCOMED BY POLICE OFFICIALS.

9. ON WAY BACK TO UDORN CONSUL VISITED IRC MEDIC DR GARCIA IN NONG KHAI. SHE SAID THAT THERE IS URGENT NEED TO RELIEVE OVERCROWDING IN PROVINCIAL DETENTION CENTER.

SME ALSO STATED THAT SHE WOULD TRAVEL TO PHON PHISAI AND BUNG KAN DISTRICTS MARCH 1/ TO EXAMINE LATEST HMONG ARRIVALS. SHE ADDED THAT SME VERY MUCH NEEDS ADDITIONAL MEDICINAL SUPPLIES AND HAS A REQUEST PENDING WITH THAI RED CROSS.

PM COMMENT: OUR ROUGH TALLY OF HMONG REFUGEES WHO HAVE ENTERED NONG KHAI PROVINCE SINCE MARCH 1 IS NOW 430. MOST PRESSING PROBLEM REGARDING HMONG INFLUX AT PRESENT, NOW THAT LOCAL AUTHORITIES SEEM TO BE ALLOWING HMONG REFUGEES UNIMPEDED ENTRY INTO PROVINCE, IS TO REDUCE OVERCROWDING OF PROVINCIAL DETENTION CENTER WHICH HAS REACHED AN INTOLERABLE LEVEL. HMONG IN PROVINCIAL DETENTION CENTER SHOULD BE MOVED INTO NONG KHAI REFUGEE CAMP WITHOUT CONFIDENTIAL

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FURTHER DELAY. IN ADDITION, ARRANGEMENTS SHOULD BE MADE WITH RTG TO PERMIT TRANSFER OF HMONG DETAINED IN PHON PHISAI AND BUNG KAN DISTRICTS DIRECTLY TO NONG KHAI CAMP WHERE THERE IS AMPLE SPACE TO HOUSE THEM IN TEMPORARY SHELTERS UNTIL PERMANENT QUARTERS CAN BE BUILT. DISTRICT POLICE ARE CAPABLE OF PROVIDING ONLY BARE MINIMUM OF SHELTER AND SUPPORT TO HMONG REFUGEES FOR TEMPORARY PERIOD.
FINNEY

UNQUOTE
WHITEMOUSE

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